

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 2101

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PN, PQ, US
SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF 439TH PRC MEETING, MARCH 23

1. RECENT VISITORS: AMBASSADOR GAVE SUMMARY IMPRESSIONS OF RECENTLY CONCLUDED VISITS OF CODELS YATRON AND GRAVEL AS WELL AS SECARMY ALEXANDER. WITH RESPECT TO SECARMY'S MEETING WITH TORRIJOS, ACTING GOVERNOR SPECULATED THAT TORRIJOS MAY HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO ALBROOK FIELD WHEN HE COMPLAINED ABOUT RIGID U.S. LANDS AND WATERS POSITION, E.G., OFFER TO RETURN NEW FRANCE FIELD WHILE RETAINING HANGARS. ACTING GOVERNOR ALSO NOTED THAT SECARMY SEEMED PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED ABOUT DILEMMA OF PANAMANIAN CANAL ZONE EMPLOYEES OF WEST INDIAN EXTRACTION AND POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THESE PERSONS TO BECOME U.S. CITIZENS.

2. TREATY DEVELOPMENTS: AMBASSADOR RECOUNTED TREATY-RELATED ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING: MURPHY COMMITTEE HEARINGS, INFORMAL MEETINGS OF U.S. AND PANAMANIAN NEGOTIATORS IN NEW YORK, U.S. NEGOTIATORS CONSULTATIONS WITH PRESIDENTS OF VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA, AND FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF PANAMANIAN TEAM TO DISCUSS CANAL ENTITY AND POSSIBLY LANDS AND WATERS.

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AMASSADOR SAID THERE WAS NO FIXED DATE FOR NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS, SPECULATING IT MIGHT BE HELD IN MID-PARIL AFTER EASTER.

3. EMPLOYEE ASSURANCES: ACTING GOVERNOR TOOK NOTE OF LOCAL PRESS REACTION TO PUBLISHED ASSURANCES. WITH EXCEPTION OF EXTREMISTS, CANAL ZONE EMPLOYEES SEEMED TO APPRECIATE HAVING THE ASSURANCES

ALTHOUGH NEARLY ALL FELT THESE WERE "INADEQUATE". HE SAID OBSERVERS SHOULD NOT BE MISLED BY THE LACK SO FAR OF STRONGER REACTION AND HE DESCRIBED EMPLOYEES AS DOING "SLOW BURN". IN PRESENTING ASSURANCES, GOVERNOR HAD INTIED WRITTEN COMMENTS AND THESE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY BEING PREPARED.

4. YANKEE TRADER: ACTING GOVERNOR REVIEWED CASE OF PASSENGER VESSEL ANCHORED AT BALBOA IN PROCESS OF CHANGING REGISTRY FROM PANAMANIAN TO BRITISH AND WHICH NATIONAL GUARD THREATENING TO SEIZE. (NOTE: DURING COURSE OF DAY, U.S. OWNERS DEPOSITED BOND WITH PANAMANIAN CONSUL IN MIAMI THEREBY ENABLING VESSEL TO DEPART UNMOLESTED FROM CANAL ZONE.)

5. MILITARY MATTERS: DEPUTY CINC REPORTED ON RECENTLY CONCLUDED MEETING IN MONTEVIDEO OF LA AIR FORCE CHIEFS OF STAFF AND ALSO VARIOUS AIR SAMPLING PROJECTS BEING CARRIED OUT IN CANAL ZONE.

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